

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-12, 14-16 and 18-23 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2, 13 and 17 are canceled, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject of dependent claim 17 (and claim 13), claims 14, 15 and 16 have been amended to account for the amendments to claim 1 and for consistency, and claim 18 has been amended into independent form.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); and (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 7-12 and 19-21 have been withdrawn by the June 29, 2005 Office Action as drawn to a non-elected species. It is respectfully requested that these claims be rejoined at least because they depend from claim 1, which recites the allowable subject matter of dependent claim 17.

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's acknowledgment of allowable subject matter in claims 17 and 18. The Office Action objects to claims 17 and 18 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. By this Amendment, the allowable subject matter of claim 17 is incorporated into independent claim 1, and dependent claim 18 is rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Tsuda (U.S. Patent No. 6,313,895); and rejects claims 13-16 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tsuda in view of Kanou (U.S. Patent No. 6,747,718). By this Amendment, the allowable

subject matter of claim 17 is incorporated into independent claim 1. Accordingly, the rejections are moot.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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